NORTHERN ISLANDER

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MARCH 2026

NORTHERN ISLANDER ANNOUNCES POETRY CONTEST

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BEAVER ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Established 1957
Keeping Island History Alive

NORTHERN ISLANDER

is proudly owned and published by the
Beaver Island Historical Society

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INTRODUCING THE NORTHERN ISLANDER POETRY CONTEST

By Brittney Rittof

Old pond...
a frog jumps in
water's sound.

By: Matsuo Bashô (1686)
Translated by: William J. Higginson

Haiku is one of Japan's most well known forms of poetry, originating in the 17th century when Shiki, one of Japan's great haiku masters, coined the term after adapting another form of poetry called hokku. There were four masters of haiku total, the first being Matsuo Bashô. He lived between 1644 to 1694 and has been called the "Shakespeare" of Japan.

Spring in Japan is a nationwide celebrated time of year, often synonymous with cherry blossoms and writing poetry. "Traditional haiku uses concrete images to convey an experience or sensory perception typically taking place in one of the four seasons," says Michael Dylan Welch; author, editor, and renowned haiku poet. This means the poems set the scene as is, without any descriptive language, thus leaving the interpretation, and the feelings or emotions to the reader. Japanese haiku takes the form of the 3-lined structure of "5-7-5." However, the Japanese language differs from the English language with the use of "sounds" instead of "syllables." Furthermore, haiku is much more than just format; there are specific guidelines that make a poem a "haiku." The two most important guidelines are the use of kigo, or a seasonal word, and the "two-part juxtapositional structure", meaning one concept of the poem contrasts the other, with the poem's structure being the means of bringing the two together. Therefore, modern haiku might not fit the 5-7-5 rule, however they are still considered so by haiku societies around the world. (For more information on modern haiku, visit Michael's website at Graceguts.com.)

I've had several haiku published and was a member of the Haiku Society of America in 2021-2022. This spring, we're pleased to bring the joy of poetry to Beaver Island by presenting the Northern Islander Poetry Contest as a way to honor each individual's view of the Emerald Isle, bringing together both solidarity and uniqueness under one, cohesive publication.

DETAILS

- Open to all ages, anyone with an island connection is welcome to submit a poem, haiku or otherwise
- The poems must be related to Beaver Island
- They can be either two short poems (3 to 12 lines) or one long poem (15-25 lines)

HOW TO ENTER

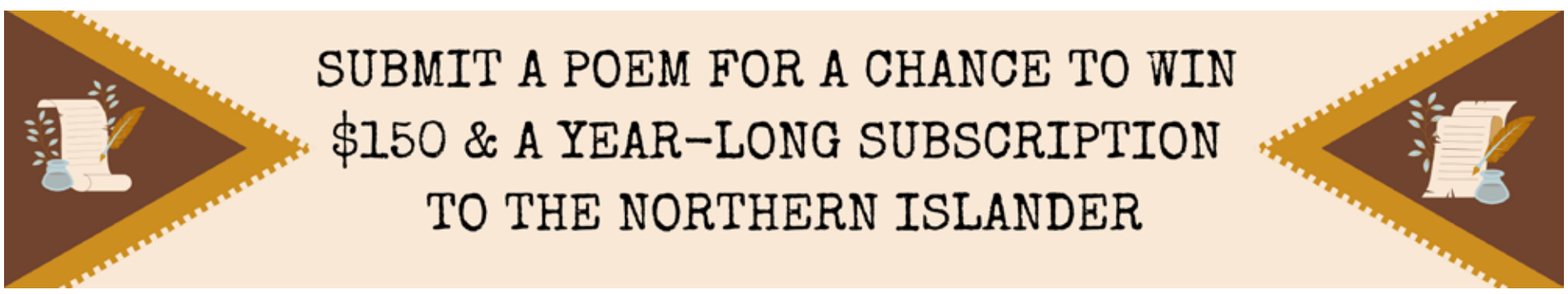
- Submissions can be emailed to editorassistant@beaverisland-history.org or editor@beaverislandhistory.org, or dropped off at the Print Shop Museum
- To be eligible, the poems will be published in the paper in the following edition. Poems can be requested to be kept private, however these will be ineligible for consideration
- Submissions will be accepted starting in March through July, with April being the first edition to feature poems, and August being the last issue

VOTING & RESULTS

- Voting opens in the September and October editions, as well as online, and the results will be published in the November edition
- ***The winner will receive $150 and a free, year-long subscription to the Northern Islander***

nature walk
i pocket
my field guide

By: Brittney Rittof
(The Unexpected Weight, 2021. p118)



Since 1957, The Beaver Island Historical Society has been working to keep Beaver Island History Alive! We advance this goal through a mission of preserving and sharing the unique history of Beaver Island and the Archipelago.

BIHS DIRECTOR SHARES BEAVER ISLAND'S STORY AT STATEWIDE CONFERENCE

The Beaver Island Historical Society Board of Trustees is proud to announce that Executive Director Lori Taylor-Blitz was selected to present at a statewide conference hosted by Saginaw Valley State University.

Lori was invited by her Leadership Learning group to speak as part of the university's "Discover Michigan" event on February 11, 2026. Her presentation, "Discover Beaver Island: Keeping Island History Alive," was featured during the morning breakout sessions, placing Beaver Island's story within the broader context of the upcoming America250 semiquincentennial.

Her talk explored how Beaver Island's unique identity has been shaped by waves of immigration, most notably Mormon and Irish settlers, each arriving in search of opportunity, freedom, and relief from persecution. Lori thoughtfully addressed the challenges these groups faced, including discrimination, while emphasizing how their experiences contributed to the Island's distinct cultural fabric that still resonates today.

Importantly, she also acknowledged that Native American history forms the foundation of all American history, noting that her presentation focused specifically on later immigrant narratives while recognizing the deeper, longstanding presence that predates them.

This opportunity not only highlights Lori's leadership and expertise, but also places Beaver Island firmly within the statewide and national conversation as the country approaches its 250th anniversary.

To learn more about Lori and the lineup of other speakers that presented at Saginaw Valley State University back in February, check out the event website at http://www.svsuollidiscovermi.com.

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NORTHERN ISLANDER

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THIRD GRADER TAKES SECOND PLACE AT DISTRICTS

By Elsie Burton

Third grader, Alice Ledbetter, competed at the district level of the Elks Hoop Shoot competition earlier this winter and brought home a second-place trophy!

Alice was awarded her trophy by the Beaver Island Elks in early February at her school's Monday flag ceremony.

For those unfamiliar, the Elks Hoop Shoot is a free throw shooting contest. Students step up to the free-throw line and take a set number of shots, with winners determined by how many baskets they make. It sounds simple, but anyone who has stood at that line knows it takes concentration and confidence to perform well. Athletes of all ages have struggled to make their free-throws!

The competition begins at the local level and moves on to districts, where top shooters from multiple communities come together for another competitive round of free-throws. By the time athletes reach this stage, the competition is tense, and every shot truly counts.

Alice worked her way through the earlier rounds to earn her spot at districts, where she represented Beaver Island with determination. Against tough competition, she delivered a strong performance and earned second place, something she and BICS should be very proud of.

Moments like this are always special for our small school. It is exciting to see our students step-up, compete, and succeed. Alice's accomplishment is a great example of what hard work and a little bit of confidence can do. And, it sounds like the Lady Islanders' basketball team has a future teammate on their way!

Congratulations, Alice! We are all proud of you.

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TOWARD 250: BEAVER ISLAND AND THE AMERICAN STORY

Introduction by Lori Taylor-Blitz

As the United States approaches its Semiquincentennial in 2026, Toward 250 invites readers to explore how Beaver Island's history intertwines with the broader American narrative.

Each installment will highlight local stories of resilience, innovation, migration, maritime heritage, and community-building that reflect the ideals and complexities of the nation's past 250 years. From Native American lifeways and Irish immigration to fishing traditions, veterans' service, and the evolution of island governance, this column connects the national commemorative moment to the Island's lived experience.

Toward 250 also welcomes contributions from community members. Writers of all ages and backgrounds are encouraged to submit short articles, family stories, essays, images, and reflections that illuminate how Beaver Island's heritage connects to the American story. Submissions may honor local traditions, share memories, or highlight individuals whose lives help define our shared history.

A SHORT HISTORY OF SETTLEMENTS ON THE BEAVER ISLAND ARCHIPELAGO

By Bobbi Welke

As the Beaver Island Historical Society continues to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States, this article introduces readers to the early settlements of the Beaver Island Archipelago. This history, which includes documenting Tribal Nation governance in our archipelago, serves as a companion to the overview of our archipelago's governance featured in the February 2026 edition of this newspaper.

ANISHINAABEK TO TRIBAL NATIONS SETTLEMENTS

The Beaver Island Archipelago has been cared for across countless generations by the Anishinaabek (Odawa/Ottawa) people. Ancient and sacred Anishinaabek cultural sites are found throughout the islands. Travelers moving between their homelands and the copper country of the Upper Peninsula used the archipelago as a way-point, relying on its resources for sustainability through fishing, hunting, trapping, cultivating food, and trading.

The Odawa or Ottawa—whose name relates to "to trade," reflecting their role in regional fur-trade network—migrated westward over time in response to interactions and conflicts with other Indigenous nations and with Europeans. The Beaver Island Archipelago is part of the homelands of two tribal nations whose histories overlap in this region.

The Waganakising Odawak (People of the Crooked Tree), today known as the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians (LTBB), moved west from the Ottawa River, a tributary of the St. Lawrence River, eventually settling on Manitoulin Island in Lake Huron. From there they moved to the Straits of Mackinac. In 1650, they continued west into what is now Wisconsin. By 1680, they returned to the Straits, and some Odawa established settlements throughout the archipelago.

The Odawa formed alliances with both the French and the British. As their communities grew, they fished, hunted, logged, trapped, traded, and cut wood, with many families wintering in southern Michigan. Beginning around 1740, Odawa living in the Straits region began relocating to the Middle Village area in search of better agricultural soils.

In 1832, Bishop Baraga, visited Beaver Island and converted Odawa living along the north shore to Catholicism. Odawa were also living in the area of the harbor. In 1859, when Baraga—as the Bishop of Upper Michigan—returned to Beaver Island, he found a Native community of devout Catholics living on Garden Island. Garden Island was the center of the archipelago's Native life. There was a school, Catholic Church, and post office on the island. It was homesteaded by Scandinavians in 1876. Its abandonment began in 1936.

A Native village existed on High Island, with fishing the predominant occupation until a major storm in November 1940 destroyed fishing boats causing abandonment of the island. A large logging operation existed on this island until 1908. A school, Catholic Church, and post office served the islanders.

Between 1912 and 1932, the House of David established an Israelite Colony here. They ran the existing sawmill until it burned down and sold farm products in St. James as well as shipping them to Benton Harbor.

Oral history traces the Kchi-Wiikwedong Anishinaabek (People of the Big Bay), now known as the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians (GTB), to the eastern coast of North America. They migrated west to the Great Lakes following a prophecy to seek the place where "food grows on water," referring to wild rice.

In the 1840s, an Odawa band led by Chief Peshawbe moved south from what is now Cross Village to present-day Leelanau County, establishing the permanent village of Eagle Town—now called Peshawbestown in his honor. That same year, a Chippewa chief moved his community from Old Mission to New Mission, now known as Omena, just north of Peshawbestown.

GTB and LTBB, along with two other tribal nations, ceded territory to the United States in the Treaty of 1836. In 1905, a village of Peshawbestown was established on Beaver Island below Angeline's Bluff, where many Native residents worked for the Beaver Island Lumber Company, until its departure in 1917. Others continued to fish.

After the restoration of GTB's federal recognition as a sovereign tribal nation in 1980, its service area was defined across six counties in northern Lower Michigan, including a portion of Charlevoix County and Beaver Island. In 1994, LTBB received federal recognition and identified its service area in Emmet County and part of Charlevoix County, including the outer islands of the archipelago.

For further historical and cultural information on these tribes, check out the below links:

- GTB: https://www.com/watch?v=Ew0JCt6UbH0
- LTTB: https://ltbbodawa-nsn.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Our-Land-and-Culture-for-web.pdf

EUROPEANS, MORMONS, AND IRISH FISHERMEN SETTLEMENTS

French traders and trappers began visiting Beaver Island in the early 1800s, trapping, fishing, and cutting wood for passing steamers. In 1837, the Northwest Company built a trading post, followed in 1838 by a second post at Whiskey Point established by Irish merchants, complete with a store, dock, and home. These posts prospered beginning in the early 1840s.

The local economy grew thanks to strong fishing grounds, extensive forests, and an excellent harbor. By 1850, about 100 people lived near Whiskey Point, unaware that the small group of Mormons already present would soon outnumber them and eventually force them to leave.

James Jesse Strang and his Mormon followers first arrived on the island in 1847. Strang claimed that as many as 2,000 Mormons ultimately settled there. Early relations between the Mormons, Native residents, and European settlers were generally positive. On July 8, 1850, however, Strang declared himself king, marking a shift toward authoritarian rule. His 1851 "consecration of spoils" proclamation—presented as divine revelation—effectively sanctioned the taking of property from non-believers. By 1852, non-Mormons had relocated to the Cable's Bay area. Strang's later order that all non-Mormons must join his church or leave the island proved decisive; by November 1852, all non-Mormons had departed Beaver Island.

On June 16, 1856, Strang was mortally wounded by two disgruntled followers and was taken to Wisconsin, where he died 24 days later. With his death, the Mormon era ended. Former residents and others drove the remaining Mormons from the island. Many who returned included Irish families from Mackinac Island, eager to claim the rich fishing grounds once controlled by the Strangites.

A large share of the new arrivals came from Arranmore Island in Ireland; in one wave alone, 40 Arranmore families settled on Beaver Island. Irish immigrants farmed, fished, built boats, and logged. They taught school, provided medical care, ran stores, operated transportation services, and served in religious, community, and government roles. In the early 1900s, others came to the island, to be part of the community or as returning visitors, building homes. Visitors came for sport fishing, hunting, recreation, and rest from the mainland world. In the 1960's islanders began developing a more formal tourism industry.

BAY NORTH REALTY

26625 Chipmunk Trail
Beaver Island

An extreme level of craftsmanship has gone into this Lake Michigan home with coffered ceilings, hardwood custom cabinetry, radiant in-floor heat, custom stained glass windows, and restored antique lighting being just a few features. For efficiency there is wind and solar power with battery storage, and a geothermal HVAC system. Before you think this home takes itself too seriously, the confessional closet stores the audio system, the painted ceiling portrays the sunrise and sunset, and there are touches of whimsy and charm at every turn. The kitchen is sunny and thoughtfully designed with appliances hidden in unfitted cabinets, with plenty of counter space, large bar, and an antique steel painted ceiling. There are two offices on the main floor, one with cherry cabinetry, the other is beautifully finished in birdseye maple. The primary suite has a lovely tile and marble bathroom with an enviable walk in closet. There are two more ensuite bedrooms upstairs. You will love the sunroom that runs the length of the house on the water side with doors leading out from all of the adjoining rooms. The beautiful sandy beach has small rocks in the water. Located close to town, yet still very private, come enjoy Beaver Island in comfort and style!

Heather Robinson, Associate Broker

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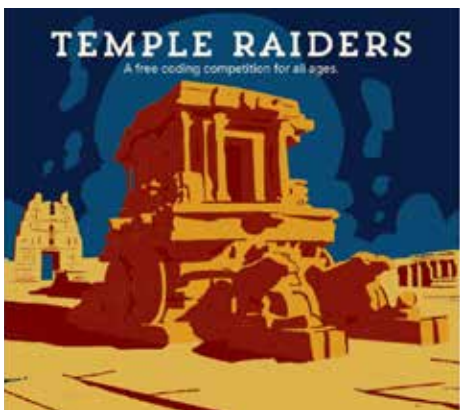

A free coding competition, February and March. All ages 8–108!

DESCRIPTION: Like all good adventures, this one was completely accidental. To start, you're a tourist at the ancient Planet Fiero jungle temple of Tikal. Innocent enough, right?

Next thing you know, you've got a centuries-old artifact in your pocket. Oh, and now it looks like some kind of magical protector of temple artifacts has materialized and is chasing after you.

In a situation like this, you've really only got one option… RUN!

YOUR MISSION: design and program a video game using Code Blocks to run away from the temple. Jump and duck to avoid tree branches and obstacles, and last as long as you can before getting caught.

NATIVE PLANTS MEDICINAL USES WITH CHERYL PODGORSKI
March 21, 1 p.m.
Cheryl will be at the library to tell us about some of the plants growing wild on the island that can be used for medicinal purposes.

AMERICA 250
We are collecting stories and observations celebrating our country's 250th anniversary.
We will combine them into a book format in May. Please make submissions prior to the end of April. Keep it positive, please—it is a celebration!

MOVIES AT THE BIC CENTER:
March 28
Sounder (PG): 3 p.m.
An uplifting story of one boy's faith, strength, and dogged determination.
Cold River (rated R):
After their father dies from a heart attack during a freak winter storm, two children are left alone in the wilderness with no food, shelter, or a way home.
6 p.m.

BEAVER TALES
Let's pull it together March 28 at 2 p.m.

Now is the time to pull all the pieces together to make a production! Bring your selections of stories, songs, poems, etc., and help us weave together the Beaver Tales: Survival presentation.

LARGE PRINT READERS:
We are taking suggestions for additions to our large print section of the library. Email us at island.library@gmail.com or call 231-448-2701. You can also just tell us when you stop in!

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY:
For those who are community-minded, lending a hand at the library is a humanitarian effort of like-minded people. Indoor or outdoor events, an hour at a time—whatever suits you is what we're looking for.

If we may contact you for help with something library-related, let us know, and we will add you to our list of like-minded people.

BIDL BOARD ANNUAL MEETING AND BUDGET HEARING
March 19 at 4:30 p.m.

BEAVER ISLAND DISTRICT LIBRARY NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED 2026–2027 BUDGET
Please take notice that on Thursday, March 19, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. at the Beaver Island District Library, 26400 Donegal Bay Road, Beaver Island, Michigan, the District Library Board of the Beaver Island District Library will hold a public hearing to consider the Library's proposed budget for the 2026–2027 fiscal year.

The Board may not adopt its proposed budget until after the public hearing. A copy of the proposed budget is available for public inspection during normal business hours at the Library, 26400 Donegal Bay Road, Beaver Island, Michigan.

All interested parties will be given an opportunity to be heard at the public hearing regarding the proposed budget.

The property tax millage rate proposed to be levied to support the proposed budget will be a subject of this hearing.

This notice is given by order of the Beaver Island District Library Board.

EDIBLE BOOK PARTY/TEEN BINGO NIGHT
on March 21 starting at 3 p.m.
Get creative! Choose a book and create an edible version to share! You can also make the title or author a pun (e.g., War and Peas)!

Last year there were Tolkien's Two Towers (one chocolate and one vanilla cupcake) and several others. Check Pinterest or Facebook for ideas, or create your own.

Bring the creations to the library for display or digestion! Think Green Eggs and Ham, If You Give a Mouse a Cookie, etc. Some will be easy, and some will need a little thinking. Following this, teens are invited to a Bingo night just for them, 5–7 p.m.

MARCH IS…

Share stories and Irish-American heritage throughout March. Read about the Irish in America or watch a documentary. Explore the archives of your local museum and heritage center to learn their traditions and culture.

Discover their language and family bonds. How did they impact the country, and what traditions did they bring with them or leave behind?

HOW TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL READING MONTH:
While global literacy has increased over the past fifty years, some people remain illiterate. Reading brings advantages to individuals and society:

- Economic growth and more sustainable living opportunities
- Lower crime rates due to improved employment prospects
- Better public health through education about disease prevention
- Greater civic participation and support for democratic practices

To boost literacy, read with your children and set an example. Limit screen time and visit the library to find books suited to their age and interests. Start reading together at any age.

KIDS STUFF

- Babies and Toddlers continues to meet on Tuesdays at 10 a.m.—a social hour for both kids and adults!
- Homeschool Meetup gathers on Tuesdays at 2:15 p.m. to offer STEM and other activities to elementary homeschool students.
- Afterschool clubs—Monday through Friday until 5 p.m.
  Mondays: Craft Club
  Tuesdays: Taste the World
  Wednesdays: Lego Club
  Thursdays: STEM Club
  Fridays: Board Games
- Fiero Code/Girls Who Code meet on Saturdays at 1 p.m. This is a time for kids to learn how to code, create their own games, and more!
- Teen Bingo Night: Following the Edible Book Party on March 21, a teen Bingo night will be held at the BIDL from 5–7 p.m.

WINTER SOWING

In February, elementary school science classes participated in winter sowing by planting seeds that require exposure to cold temperatures before they can sprout.

Monica Longlet led this activity, with assistance from Janet Nank, as students planted several types of seeds. These plants will be added to our native garden area in the spring.

Additionally, there are many cold-stratification seeds available at the library, including yellow and purple coneflowers, wild bergamot, early sunflower, button blazing star, nodding onion, prairie dropseed, and Big Bluestem grass—all ready for you to start growing on your own.

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GRAND TRAVERSE BAND GRANT FUNDING SUPPORT – NEARLY $500,000 FOR BEAVER ISLAND

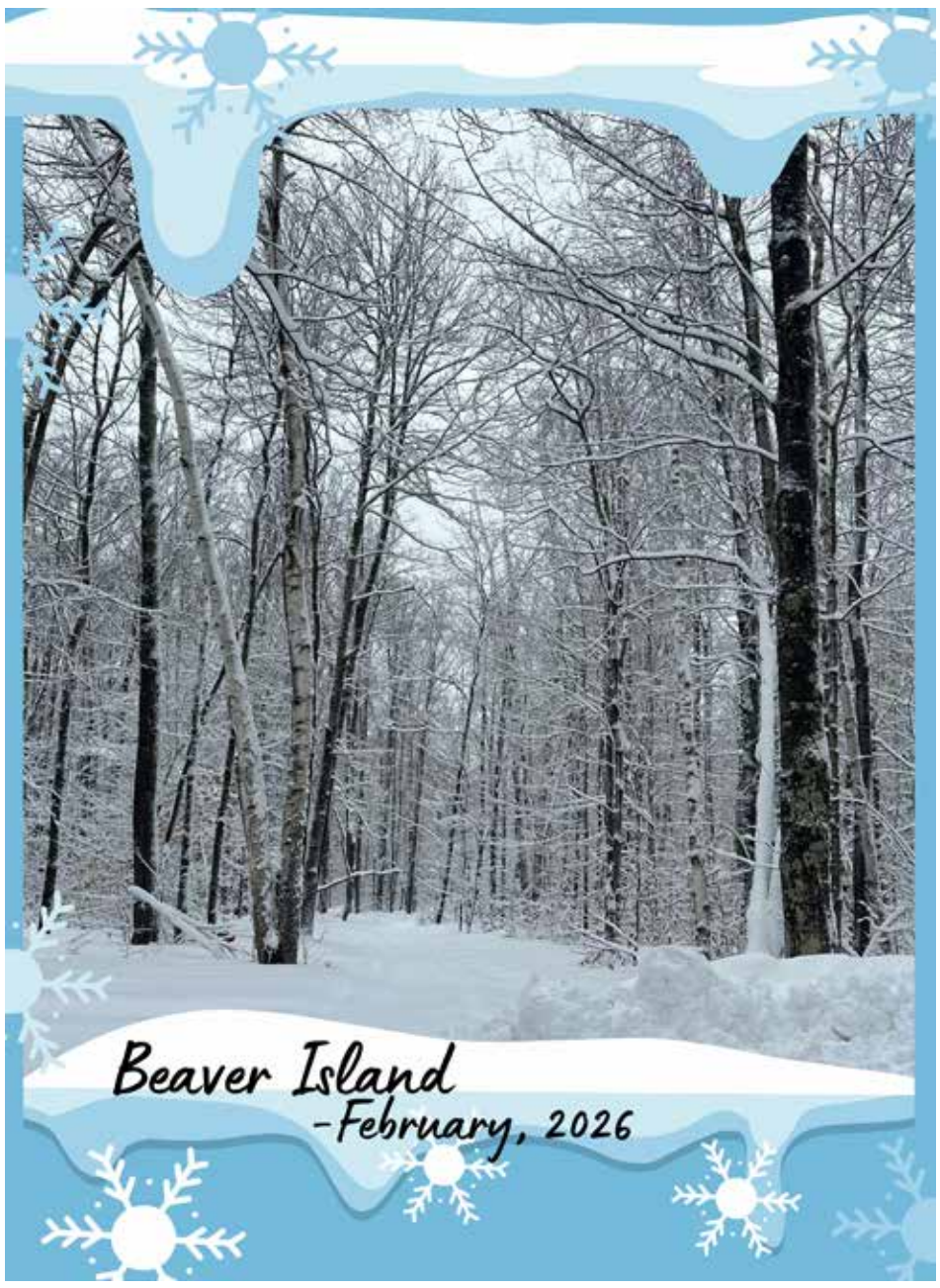
By Bobbi Welke, St. James Township Supervisor

On January 30, 2026, officials from St. James Township and the Beaver Island Rural Health Center accepted two grant awards from the Grand Traverse Band of Odawa and Chippewa Indians (GTB). These two township grants were passed-through to the Beaver Island Community Center (BICC) and Beaver Island Rural Health Center and are explained in companion articles. Beaver Island has been fortunate to receive nearly $500,000 in GTB grants over its 32-year history. Sharing the GTB grant program on behalf of the Island's 11 recipients is an important story for our community to recognize.

In 1994, GTB began issuing grants to local units of governments and schools throughout their six-county service area. Their service area includes Charlevoix County. These grants are based on a federal consent decree between GTB and the State of Michigan which requires 2% of GTB's video game revenue to be distributed twice a year. The grants are used to benefit the region by funding public services, infrastructure improvements, equipment for emergency services, and community projects (e.g., parks, childcare). As of January 26, 2026, GTB has issued a total of $49,399,531.10 in grants in their six-county region.

Beaver Island began receiving GTB grants in 1999. As of January 26, 2026, 36 grants in the total amount of $494,763 has been received to fund projects and programs at the Beaver Island Lighthouse School, the Beaver Island Community School, and to the townships as pass-through to BIEMS, Beaver Island Fire Department and Auxiliary, Beaver Island AmVets, Beaver Island Community Development Corporation (owner of Forest View), BICC, BI Historical Society, and Beaver Island Rural Health Center. Three of these grants were issued for St. James Township projects with grants totaling $81,000.

In 2025, Charlevoix County Sheriff's Office received grant funds for blight remediation at tribal member properties on the mainland and the island. So far, six vehicles were removed from the island properties. In 2026, the county will continue their island blight cleanup.



Records from GTB report that Beaver Island was awarded 2% grants as follows:

- 1999: Beaver Island Lighthouse School for academic work readiness and a life skills youth program - $4,000
- 1999: Beaver Island Lighthouse School for conflict resolution and diversity training for youth program - $3,370
- 1999: St. James Township for BIEMS for a LifePak Defibrillator/EKG Machine - $16,000
- 2000: St. James Township for paving Back Hwy, Kenwabikise St, Gallagher St, and the Yacht Dock parking lot - $50,000
- 2000: St. James Township for the BI Community Center construction - $38,731.75
- 2002: Beaver Island Community School for a position to implement Phase 2 of their strategic plan - $10,000
- 2002: Beaver Island Lighthouse School for two computer stations - $9,000
- 2003: Beaver Island Community School for sports travel expenses and professional development - $10,000
- 2003: St. James Township for the BI Rural Health Center construction - $25,000
- 2003: St. James Township for BIEMS for air ambulance service - $25,000
- 2004: St. James Township for BI Historical Society to protect two wood boats next to the Marine Museum - $25,000
- 2005: St. James Township for the BIEMS for Rescue Equipment - $12,000
- 2005: St. James Township for the BI Rural Health Center's capital campaign - $15,000
- 2006: Beaver Island Community School for playground equipment - $15,500
- 2006: Beaver Island Lighthouse School for textbooks and a woodshop - $9,000
- 2006: Beaver Island Community Development Corporation (BICDC) for senior housing development at Forest View - $15,000
- 2006: St. James Township for BI Fire, EMS, and Rural Health Center to purchase communication equipment - $20,000
- 2007: St. James Township for BI Fire to fund water rescue equipment - $9,000
- 2007: St. James Township for BI Rural Health Center to fund computer equipment - $6,800
- 2008: St. James Township to restore and preserve the Whiskey Point light tower - $6,000
- 2008: Beaver Island Community School for the school entrance, including a stained-glass window - $7,000
- 2009: St. James Township for BIEMS for AEDs and ECG monitors - $8,200
- 2010: Beaver Island Community School for their strings and science program - $8,000
- 2012: Peaine Township for BICDC AC units - $9,090
- 2012: St. James Township for BI Fire Dept Auxiliary for a pole barn - $25,000
- 2013: St. James Township for BICDC AC units in senior housing - $7,000
- 2014: St. James Township for AmVets Post 46's Memorial park - $5,600
- 2015: St. James Township for BIEMS building communication capacity - $3,320
- 2016: St. James Township for BIEMS rapid response vehicle - $20,246.73
- 2017: Beaver Island Community Schools for a scoreboard - $3,343
- 2018: Beaver Island Community School for playground equipment - $3,000
- 2019: St. James Township to improve the Marina North Fuel Dock - $25,000
- 2023: St. James Township for BIEMS for a cardiac monitor - $13,547.50
- 2025: St. James Township for BI Rural Health Center for a portable ultrasound machine - $2,584
- 2025: St. James Township for BI Rural Health Center HVAC improvements - $2,430
- 2025: St. James Township for BI Community Center for replacement flooring and replacement of computers in the Hangout - $8,000

Tried and True Family Favorite Recipes

Betty Scoggin's Berrien Hills Beer Soup

Submitted by Rach Becker

Each month, we will feature recipes that are sure to have you coming back for seconds. These are the recipes that we grew up with and still make today.

Betty Scoggin and her husband, Kenn, first came to Beaver Island in 1980, when they sailed up Lake Michigan from Saint Joseph, Michigan. They sailed many times before moving full-time to Beaver Island in 2002. One of their favorite things to do once they got to Beaver Island was to sail to the outer islands. They would often spend the night on their boat in various Island harbors. Their favorite (besides Beaver, of course) was High Island. They liked learning about the history of The House of David. They met some members of The House of David in Benton Harbor, who told Kenn and Betty all about how they participated in the House of David on High Island.

Betty worked at Social Services as an Adult Service Worker. Kenn was a captain and would take a variety of boats up to the Island. One such time, he trailered a boat from Saint Joe to Charlevoix and took it to the Island for him to use. He decided it was not ideal for what he needed, so he bartered with someone for ten beautiful acres on Fox Lake Road. They still own the property, but ended up settling a little further down West Side Drive.

You do not necessarily have to add the turnips. Betty makes it without the turnips and says that it tastes great.

Blasta! (Irish for delicious)

Ingredients:
1-1/2 quarts chicken stock or bouillon
1-1/2 cups celery, minced
1-1/2 cups carrots, minced
1/2 cup turnips, minced
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1 Tablespoon Accent
Salt to taste
1/2 cup flour
Melted butter or oil
3/4 cup shredded cheddar cheese
3/4 cup American cheese
6 Ounces of beer

Place chicken stock, Accent, salt, celery, onions, carrots, and turnips into a soup pot and bring to a boil. Allow to boil for about 10 minutes, or until the vegetables are tender. Strain most of the stock from the vegetables into another pot, reserving the vegetables for later. Return stock to the burner, and add pepper. Bring to a boil. Thicken with flour, moistened with oil. Add grated cheese. Stir until melted. Add vegetables and bring to a boil. Add beer (Do not boil after adding the beer)

CONSTRUCTION IS COMING TO ST. JAMES TOWNSHIP

Submitted by the St James Township Board

Road Work Planned: St. James Township is pleased to share with our community that work will be performed on Freesoil Avenue and Maple Street in 2026. Charlevoix County Road Commission (CCRC) issued bids for the work on these two roadways in January 2026. In February CCRC accepted the bids from Rieth-Riley Construction to perform the work. CCRC will manage the work.

Work Descriptions and Funding:

- The paved portion of Freesoil Avenue will be improved by removing the deteriorated pavement and adding new 18’ wide and 530’ long pavement. The existing deteriorated sidewalk will be replaced. The project bid amount is $75,432.20 with the township funding $37,716.10 and CCRC funding $37,716.10. The township funds come from property owner’s property taxes for the road millage.
- The full 845’ length of Maple Street, from Michigan Avenue to Lake Street, will be graded, aggregate added, and the road paved to a 22’ width. The project bid amount was $92,647.13. Various Maple Street property owners will fund this project by paying St. James Township the required funds which in turn will reimburse CCRC for their payments to the contractor.

Area Property Owner Communication: Property owners along both roadways were notified of the projects via letters mailed February 13. While both projects conclude on August 24, 2026, it is likely but not guaranteed that the pavement work will be completed in May or June.

Public Notice: The township’s fiscal year begins each April 1. Each March, the township prepares for the new fiscal year in accordance with state legislation.

The township holds a Special Board Meeting and Public Hearing that covers our proposed budget, truth-in-taxation requirements, and a six-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Potential Public Works Projects: In regard to the CIP, the township has discussed and will continue to discuss potential projects related to public work categories of:

- Grounds and Park Projects
- Road, Bike Path, and Parking Lot Projects
- Township Sewer Projects
- Transfer Station Projects
- Beaver Island Airport Projects

Updated information regarding these two road projects and other projects being considered for 2026 through 2031 will be provided at the March 30, 2026 public hearing scheduled for 4:00 p.m. at the Beaver Island Community Center. Your presence is respectfully requested.

ST. JAMES TOWNSHIP NOTICE

The St. James Township Board will hold a public hearing on the proposed township budget for fiscal year 2026/2027, which begins on April 1, at the Beaver Island Community Center, 26215 Main Street, on March 30, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. A copy of the budget will be available for public inspection at the Government Center, 37830 King’s Highway beginning at 10:00 a.m. on March 23, 2026.

The property tax millage rate proposed to be levied to support the proposed budget will be a subject of this hearing.

The same public hearing will include the township’s capital improvements plans. A copy of the capital improvement plan will be available at the above noted address beginning 10:00 a.m. on March 23, 2026.

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ON THE FRONT PORCH WITH KATHLEENA MASON

By Michelle LaFreniere

Kathleena Mason is our [Beaver Island's] EMS director. She is BUSY. She is also one of the most genuine humans I have ever met.

I see a lot of Kathleena at work. She comes in regularly to check EMS equipment we keep there. She tests everything, checks expiration dates, and documents. We laugh about something funny every single time. She comes in with a big smile every time. She brings sunlight wherever she goes. I attribute this to a few things.

The way she was raised. She is one of six children, the oldest girl. Her family is very close. They were raised with a strong faith, homeschooled, and obviously loved beyond measure. Her mom comes often to help with EMS. (Her mom, Christy, is an EMT.)

She genuinely has a love of people, animals, and all living things. She is very compassionate. I've been on scene with her as a bystander and witnessed such kindness while showing the utmost professionalism. Anyone knows that half of caring for sick people in stressful situations is being comforting and calming. She aces this.

Genetics. Her mom has the same wide smile and laughing eyes. She often gets mistaken for being Kathleena's sister.
Yay for mom, hehe.

I was able to get a visit in with Kathleena the other night after work. She welcomed me with a slice of Colleen Martin's homemade banana bread. IYKYK [if you know, you know]. Best stuff ever. I had a second piece. Don't tell on me!

We (meaning Kathleena and I and her two pups) sat down to a most comfortable visit. We talked about everything under the sun. She may have to start a private practice as a therapist soon.

I asked all the usual questions. When did you first come to the island? How did you find us? Etc.

Kathleena started working for our EMS in October of 2020, during the height of COVID. She bought her house on the East Side the following summer. She had moved here from East Jordan.

She came to Beaver Island EMS when Cody Randall was the director, and when Cody left, she applied for his job and got it. I am so glad she did. She has no plans to go anywhere. She loves the island, her home, her job. Big bonus: her family loves to come visit her here.

Generations of island families can tell you the importance of family. Without family, we would be nothing. We must count on each other. Beaver Island's people are the family she chose.

When she is not on call here, she sometimes goes to the mainland to visit family. Occasionally, she will pick up shifts in Boyne City just to keep her skills honed.

When she spends her time off here on the island, she loves to read. She says, though, that she collects books much faster than she can read them. Someday she wants floor-to-ceiling bookshelves. She loves to cross-stitch. She enjoys just sitting on her deck and looking out over the water. She really has a beautiful view and a wonderful sandy beach. So much to be thankful for.

We spoke about her homeschooling years. Her mom homeschooled all six children and ran the office for her husband's (now her brothers') heating and cooling business. She loved it. She would get her work done so far ahead of time. She loved to learn, and it shows. Kathleena maintained honors throughout her paramedic program at North Central Michigan College (NCMC).

Her favorite thing about the island is the community. The people are what make it for her. Her favorite place here is her own home. She loves the house and the view. It is a very comfortable place to call home. I can see why she likes it.

We ended our conversation, playing with her dogs, Kiwi and Piper. Piper has been with her since he was just a wee pup, and Piper is a rescue that fits in perfectly with their family. Basically, she got her dog a dog.

I can't wait for summer. Kathleena invited me out for board games and the gorgeous view. I will definitely be going back!

Stay warm, and see you in the summer, Kathleena. I am glad you are here.

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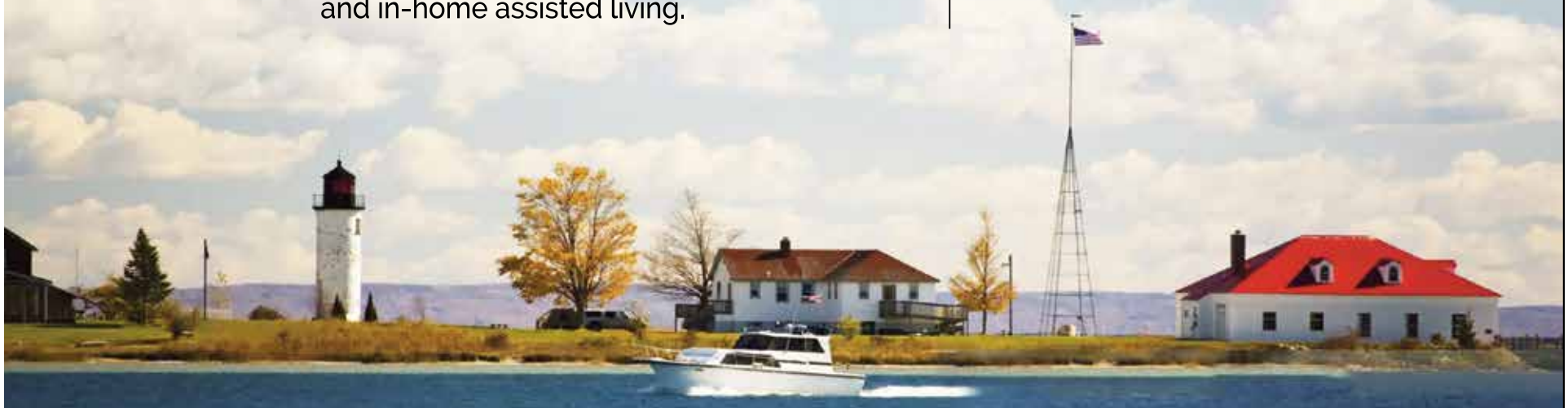

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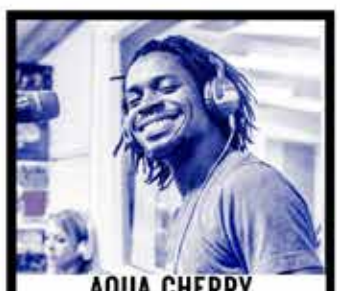
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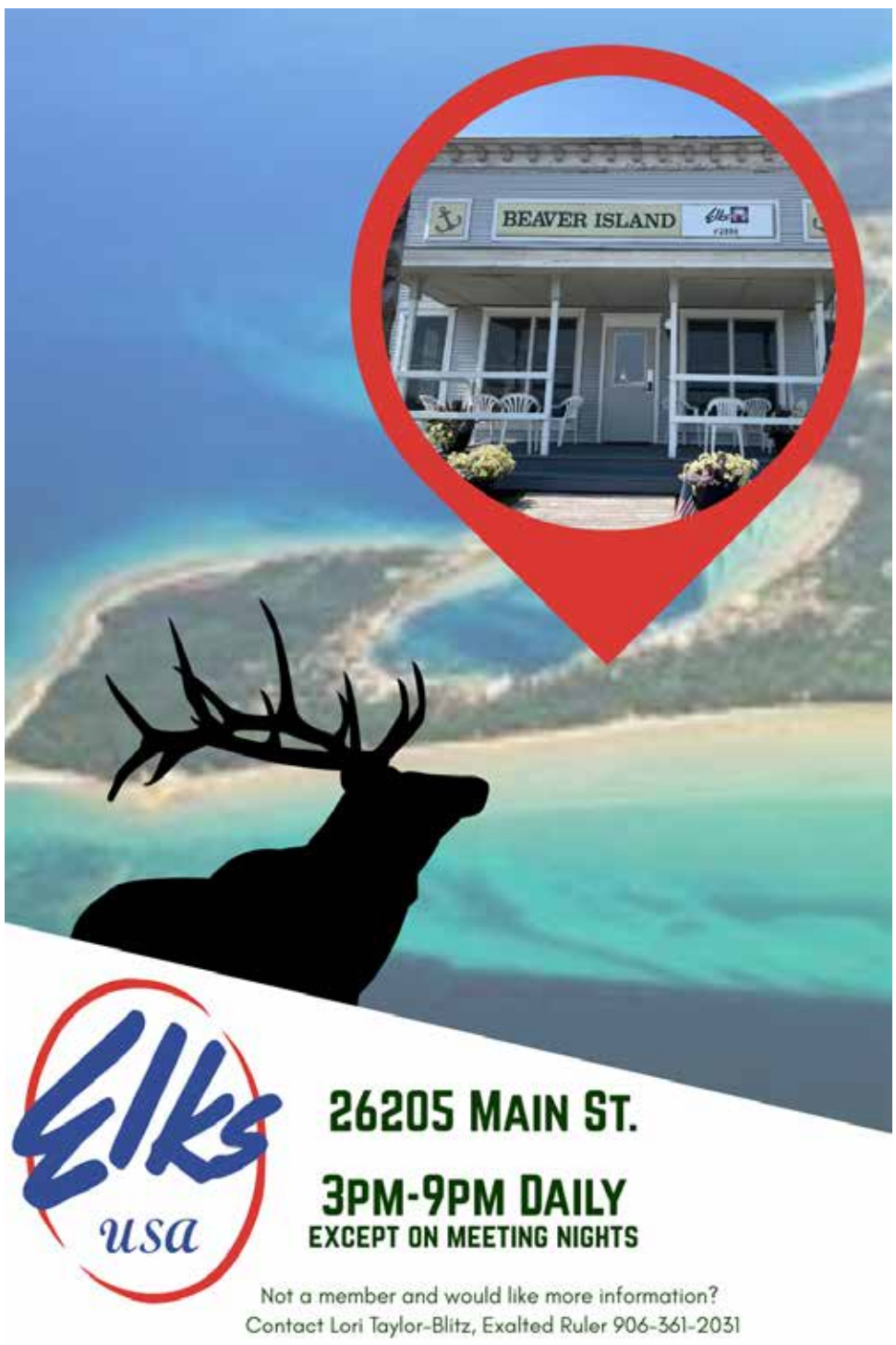


BEAVER ISLAND RURAL HEALTH CENTER

By Frank D'Andraia

The Beaver Island Rural Health Center recently secured funding from two sources to cover the costs of repairing and replacing some of its heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment. The Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians and the Charlevoix County Community Foundation awarded the grants.

Thanks to these grants, the RHC could afford to repair, upgrade, and enhance its HVAC system. The work not only improves the equipment's energy efficiency and indoor air quality but it is also expected to lower the center's operational expenses.

The two awards totaled $4,860, covering 60% of the repair bill, which is estimated at $8,100. The Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, a federally recognized Native American tribe in northwest Michigan, awarded $911,000 in grants to 57 local applicants in 2025. The grants, funded by gaming revenue, represent approximately 2% of the tribe's total budget. Sandra Witherspoon of Charlevoix currently serves as the tribal chairperson.

The Charlevoix County Community Foundation (c3f) is a nonprofit organization based in East Jordan. Their mission is to improve life in Charlevoix County by providing grants and support for various community needs, including the arts, education, and basic human services. Since its founding in 1992, c3f has connected donors with local initiatives to foster community growth and well-being.

In c3f's 2025 fall cycle, a total of 25 grants valued at $247,000 were awarded to nonprofit groups in Beaver Island, Boyne City, Charlevoix, and East Jordan.

Community Collage

BEAVER ISLAND AT A GLANCE

2026 Lake Geneserath Fishing Tournament Winners Announced!

KIDS:
(Pike) 1st - Garrett Warmerdam
(Pike) 2nd - Jolene Warmerdam
(Pike) 3rd - Mason Wojan
Smallest Bluegill - Lily Warmerdam

ADULTS:
(*Pike*) 1st - Doug Fuller
(Pike) 2nd - Wil Cwikiel
(Pike) 3rd - Acacia Warmerdam
(*Bluegill*) 1st - Shelby Harris
(*Bluegill*) 2nd - Darrell Butler
(*Bluegill*) 3rd - Randy Osborn

Photos provided by the Beaver Island Wildlife Club

The Kids' Corner

Sponsored by Brittney Rittof

How many words can you rhyme with the word

WRITE

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

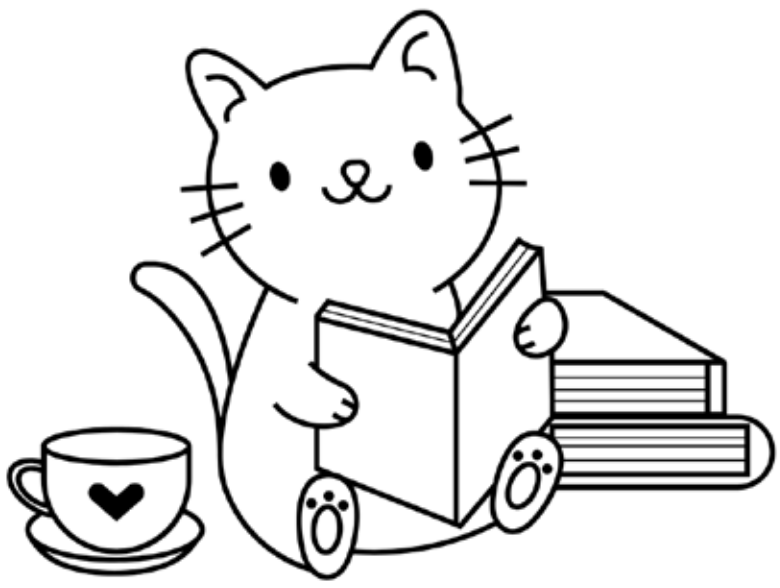
Find words for each category, then use those words to mad-lib a silly poem

_____	_____
WEATHER	COLOR
_____	_____
THING	ADJECTIVE #1
_____	_____
SPORT	ADJECTIVE #2

On a _____ day, I went for a walk
(weather)
I met a _____ cat that had learned to talk!
(color)

His name was _____ and his eyes were gray.
(thing)
He has a _____ toy and he wants to play!
(adjective #1)

You played catch, fetch, and _____ too!
(sport)
You're happy to have a friend who's _____ like you!
(adjective #2)



Don't forget to bring your completed kids' page to the Beaver Island Print Shop Museum for a prize!

AND, send a picture of you and your page to **editor@beaverislandhistory.org** to be featured in the monthly paper!

PUT SOMETHING IN *(A Light in the Attic)*
by SHEL SILVERSTEIN

Draw a crazy picture,
Write a nutty poem,
Sing a mumble-gumble song,
Whistle through your comb.
Do a loony-goony dance
'Cross the kitchen floor,
Put something silly in the world
That ain't been there before.

ANNOUNCING WORLD-CLASS PERFORMERS FOR EMERALD ISLE IRISH FÉILE 2026

By Kathleen "Kitty" McNamara

The Beaver Island Irish Heritage Group is thrilled to announce an extraordinary lineup of musical talent for the Emerald Isle Irish Féile, taking place on September 11th and 12th, 2026. This year's festival will feature groups from Michigan as well as acclaimed artists traveling from Donegal and Arranmore in Ireland, promising a celebration of Irish culture unlike any other. There will be a couple more groups added to the list. Féile Tickets go on sale March 13, 2026 at irishfeile.com.

Altan: Altan stands as one of Ireland's most esteemed musical groups, recognized globally for their mastery of traditional Irish music. Their numerous awards and accolades, coupled with a devoted worldwide fan base, reflect their stature and influence in the genre. Rarely do festivals of our size and resources have the privilege to host artists of Altan's caliber. Adding to the cultural significance of Altan's appearance, the lead singer of Altan, Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, has a direct connection to Beaver Island through longstanding associations with County Donegal fiddling traditions. Beaver Island has been acknowledged by the Donegal Fiddlers Association for its role connecting modern Donegal fiddling with its pre-famine musical heritage. This connection is largely due to the 1930s recordings made by folklorist Alan Lomax of Beaver Island fiddler Patrick Bonner.

Arranmore Pipe Band: Making a triumphant return to Beaver Island, hailing from Arranmore Island, this traditional pipe band is renowned for their powerful performances and dedication to preserving Irish piping heritage. Anyone who was at the dock in 2023, when the pipe band marched off the back of the Emerald Isle onto the land of so many Arranmore emigrants, will tell you this is a group not to be missed. Their presence will permeate every aspect of the festival and bring joy to your heart. This group will be arriving on Beaver Island on Thursday, September 10, 2026—make sure you are on the dock when they arrive.

Stay Happy Band: The stay happy band consists of Beaver Islanders Cindy Gillespie Cushman, Rita Palmer, Hilary Palmer, Ava Palmer-Bousquet and fiddler Ruby John. This group is made-up of Islanders who remember and build on the traditions of Beaver Island music, reminiscent of the island's historic house parties and hall parties. The group includes fiddle, guitar, bodhran, and vocals including amazing harmonies. This is a fun group who gets the audience involved and enjoying a collection of Irish and old country songs. A must see and hear!

Danny Gillespie & Friends: Danny Gillespie & Friends is a local favorite, led by Beaver Island native and BI Irish American Hall of Fame member Danny Gillespie. Influenced by his musician parents and other island legends, Danny has become a staple of entertainment for generations through performances at various venues. The group includes Brother Jim Boynton, skilled in fiddle, tin whistle, and vocals, as well as Shawnie McDonough on banjo and vocals, with occasional appearances by Timmy Baker and Jackson Smith.

Jerry Early & Arranmore Friends: Jerry Early is an Irish singer and songwriter from Arranmore Island, and this group has become a staple at our festival! Jerry is supported by (some might say propped up) the awesome Anne Connaghan and her husband John Flanagan and singer John Gallagher. They are known for storytelling and folk melodies and great singalongs. These musicians put their all into our festival and provide authenticity and a direct link to Arranmore Island. This group also hosts cultural workshops: mummers, dancing and Irish football.

Latency: Bridging Arranmore and Beaver Island with one shared heartbeat, Latency brings together exceptional musicians whose roots run deep on both shores. Their blend of traditional and contemporary songs carries the spirit of Ireland across the Atlantic.

Featuring Hilary Palmer and Shawn McDonough, Latency lands on Beaver Island with a sound that is fresh, grounded, and true to the idea of Two Islands, One Soul. This group's preparation for the festival has been by working across time zones—hence the name Latency due to lags in communication technology while practicing. Definitely an act to put on your 'must attend' checklist. Brother Crowe: This Detroit-based group is bringing the celtic rock energy to Beaver Island. This band fuses Celtic roots with Americana, delivering high-energy shows packed with original songs and Irish classics. They have played with Tommy Makem, The International Symphony Orchestra, Gaelic Storm, Seven Nations, The High Kings, The Prodigals, and many more. Band members are Derek Wikarski – Lead vocals, harmonica, bodhran, mandolin; Paul Wikarski – Guitar, banjo, fiddle, bodhran, vocals; Stephen Vilnius – Bass guitar, backing vocals; Bob Gilbert – Drums, backing vocal; Steve Lesko – Fiddle.

Bastard Bearded Irishmen: With their raucous blend of punk, rock, and traditional Irish music, Bastard Bearded Irishmen from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania guarantee a rollicking good time. Though members have come and gone since their formation in 2008, the current line-up is cemented by frontman & founder Jimmy Bastard, Ryan Warmbrodt (guitar/vocals), Sean-Paul Williams (bass), Paul Dvorchak (mandolin), Steve LaRussa (drums), Luke Zacherl & Stephen Weiss (fiddle). An immensely talented and dedicated group of musicians that could hold their own on stage with The Pogues, Flogging Molly or Dropkick Murphys. No band from Pittsburgh makes me want to drink more.

Don't miss this unique opportunity to experience world-class Irish music on Michigan's Emerald Isle, Beaver Island. Tickets go on sale on March 13, 2026, the first 150 at an early bird price of $85.00 and the remaining 400 tickets will sell for $95.00; a bargain by any standards, same rate as last year. Mark your calendars for September 11th and 12th, 2026!

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Arranmore Pipe Band
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In BI Real Estate

Hall's Foxview Home on the North Side of Fox Lake.

A 3 bedroom, 2 bath home on 100 feet of Lake Frontage (Lot 8 of the Fox Lake Plat) near the State land on the northeast corner of Fox Lake. This house has a beautiful view of Fox Lake bog (which will always remain natural because it is State Land), and a view to the west and southwest across Fox Lake with sunsets about half of the year. The house is on a private drive just south of the year-round county road known as Fox Lake Road. This house is in the perfect location for easy year-round access and it would make the perfect retirement home or a nice family home. A large deck on two sides of the house with an absolutely incredible view of Fox Lake also makes it a very nice second homesite. It has a large utility room in the basement and a spacious finished family room area, plus the second bathroom and a two car garage. There is a combined kitchen and dining room area separated by a stone fireplace from the living room that has glass all across the front of the house. There are a lot of features to this house, that you have to see to appreciate. It has 660 sq.ft. of finished area in the basement family room, 960 sq.ft. on the main floor and 534 sq.ft. on the second floor for over 2,100 sq.ft of living area. It has a lot of storage closets, plus a lot of storage area in the utility room. This house has long life shingles, a central stereo system, self-draining plumbing, a 12 gallon per minute well, a loft above the 2 car garage for storage, and many outside floods and decorator lights. The house does need to be thoroughly cleaned. The lot value and house replacement cost come to over $1,020,000, so it is a good buy at the asking price of **$449,000**.

Ed Wojan Realty - 26300 Back Highway - Beaver Island, MI 49782 - www.edwojanrealty.com

BEAVER ISLAND TOWNSHIP AIRPORT NOTICE

By the Beaver Island Airport Commission (BIAC) and Ben Hoover, P.E. of Mead and Hunt

In the Spring of 2026, the Beaver Island Township Airport (Beaver Island Airport – SJX) will undergo an upgrade to rehabilitate the asphalt pavement on Runway 9-27, taxiways and apron and reconstruct the Runway 9-27 lighting and REIL systems. Basically, the existing pavement on the runway, taxiways, and apron will be removed and replaced with a new asphalt surface. The runway edge lights and guidance signs along with REILs (Runway End Identifier Lights) for both runway ends will be replaced as well as associated other electrical components.

This Capital Improvement Project has been on the airport commission's "radar" and corresponding 5 year plan for some time. The pavements included in this project were last rehabilitated in 2001 and are reaching the end of their useful life. The availability of funding and need for the project have intersected to make this an opportune time to complete this work as well as other island paving projects.

A detailed geotechnical investigation was completed in 2023 by Somat Engineering, Inc. of Detroit, MI which included pavement cores and soil borings drilled to a depth of 6 to 7 feet, followed up with a comprehensive design completed by Mead & Hunt, Inc. of Lansing, MI. The construction plan has been developed to ensure a thorough, cost-effective rehabilitation solution while minimizing the construction impacts to airport operations.

Rieth-Riley Construction Co., Inc. of Charlevoix, MI is the prime contractor for the project and will complete the earthwork and paving items. J. Ranck Electric, Inc. of Mount Pleasant, MI is a major subcontractor and will perform the electrical items. Mead and Hunt, Inc. will be on-site during the project and is responsible for construction administration. The approved contracts total over six million dollars and will use funding from the Federal Aviation Administration (94%), State of Michigan (3%), and local Townships (1.5% each).

Construction is planned to take place beginning in late Spring 2026 (tentatively Tuesday, May 26), with 36 total calendar days. Airport staff will issue Notice to Airmen (NOTAMs) for closures on the airfield. Parts of the airport will be available for helicopter medical evacuation's while the paved runway is closed. This schedule is subject to change due to grant funding requirements, contractor performance, weather, etc. The Airport will communicate any changes as needed to this schedule.

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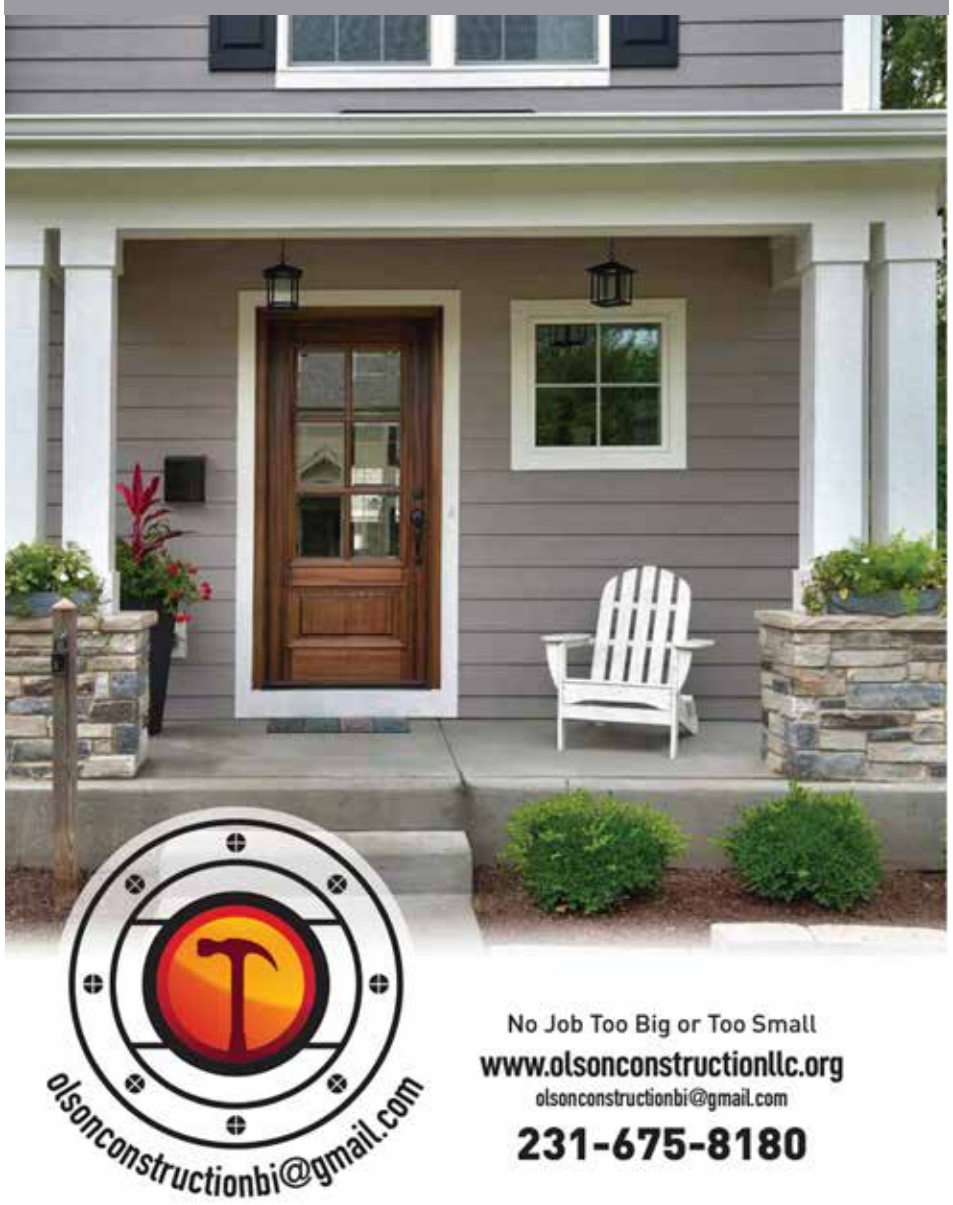

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Beaver Island

ST. PATRICK'S DAY FESTIVITIES

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MERRIMENT AND IRISH CHEER THIS MARCH AT THE BEAVER ISLAND COMMUNITY CENTER

March has a way of stirring anticipation for spring. The days stretch a little longer, the light shifts, and there's a quiet sense that something new is on the horizon. At the Beaver Island Community Center, the month reflects that energy with a full calendar of art classes, films, Irish music, St. Patrick's festivities, and the steady weekly programs that bring people together. Below are the month's highlights.

IRISH MUSIC WITH BEN TRAVERSE & NICK VEINE | MARCH 12 AT 6:30 PM

The Beaver Island Irish Heritage Group presents Ben Traverse and Nick Veine in the BIC Center Theater to kick off St. Patrick's celebrations. This dynamic duo blends soulful ballads with lively reels, inviting the audience to sing along, tap their feet, and immerse themselves in Ireland's rich musical traditions. Tickets are $20 at tickets.biccenter.org; reserve a full table to receive a raffle ticket. Kids 17 and under attend free with an adult. The evening is BYOB and promises music, merriment, and plenty of Irish spirits.

SHAMROCKS AND SHENANIGANS | MARCH 14 FROM 11:00 AM–1:00 PM

Our annual St. Patrick's celebration returns with face painting, hair dye, and kid-friendly fun. It's a lively and colorful way for families to join in the holiday spirit and celebrate together.

WEEKLY PROGRAMS THAT KEEP US MOVING AND CONNECTED

Throughout March, our regular programming continues to anchor the week:

- Pickleball – Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 10:00 a.m., with an additional evening session on Thursdays at 5:00 p.m.
- Arthritis Foundation Chair Strength Training – Tuesdays and Fridays at 10:30 a.m.
- Senior Advisory Committee Bingo – Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. in the Hangout, featuring conversation, laughter, and prizes
- Senior + Veterans Coffee & Donuts – Fridays from 9:00–11:00 a.m. in the lobby Free for veterans and seniors (60+) thanks to the generosity of Apex Insurance

These consistent gatherings provide opportunities for movement, connection, and community—simple rhythms that carry us through the month.

TIME FOR ART | TUESDAYS AT 5:00 PM

March's Time for Art series explores a variety of hands-on techniques, with classes designed to welcome beginners while still inspiring experienced makers.

- March 4 – Quilling with Lois Stipp
  Explore the Victorian art of rolling and shaping paper into decorative designs. Lois's guidance makes this historic craft feel fresh and versatile.
- March 11 – Embroidery with Lois Stipp
  Learn simple stitches using floss and yarn on felt and fabric. No experience necessary—just a willingness to create.
- March 18 – Mosaic Tiles with Cindy Ricksgers
  Combine paint, recycled materials, and texture to create colorful mosaic pieces full of character.
- March 25 – Ornaments with Lois Stipp
  Transform elements from the mosaic class into finished ornaments and keepsakes.

SATURDAY MOVIES AT THE CENTER | SATURDAYS AT 3 PM AND 6 PM

Saturday movies continue throughout March with a wide-ranging mix of animated adventures, suspenseful sequels, classic storytelling, and a continuation of BIDL's Big Read. From family friendly favorites to thoughtful historical dramas, this month's lineup offers something for every age and interest, making the theater a welcoming place to spend a few hours together.

Saturday Movies at the BIC Center are made possible through community donations, and we're grateful for the support that keeps the screen glowing. Fresh popcorn and concessions will be available at every showing.

A PLACE TO GATHER AS THE SEASONS SHIFT

With winter lingering, it can still be tempting to stay indoors and wait for warmer days to arrive. Your Community Center offers something in the meantime: a reason to step out, share a table, learn a skill, hear live music, or simply recognize a familiar face across the room. It's not grand or complicated—but it is steady, welcoming, and rooted in the simple act of showing up for one another.

For updates, full details, and dates for additional activities throughout the month, visit the Community Calendar at biccenter.org/calendar or follow the Beaver Island Community Center on Facebook.

NORDLING ANNOUNCES FINAL SEASON AS MUSIC DIRECTOR

By Robert Nordling

Dear Friends of Baroque on Beaver,

This coming summer, Baroque on Beaver celebrates 25 years of music making—an extraordinary milestone made possible by talented musicians and the generous support, enthusiasm, and presence of this remarkable community. Together, we have built a professional, artistically respected Midwest music festival that I am deeply proud to be part of. Bravo, and thank you.

As we look toward the future of the festival, I've been reflecting on the care and continuity that have always guided its growth. One of the great joys of my time as Music Director has been working alongside musicians and colleagues who share a deep love for this music and this place.

With that in mind, I want to share with you that the 2026 season will be my final year serving as Music Director. This feels like a natural passing of the baton; a way to ensure the artistic vision and spirit of Baroque on Beaver continue to flourish for years to come.

I am thrilled to tell you that Nathan Bieber, Associate Conductor of Baroque on Beaver, will step into the role of Interim Music Director. Nathan and I have worked closely together, and I have great admiration for his musical insight, sensitivity, and ability to connect with both musicians and audiences. I could not feel more confident about the festival's future in his hands.

For this coming summer, I will be fully present and fully engaged in rehearsing and performing a series of wonderful programs, and I look forward to sharing another beautiful season with all of you. I will also remain involved with the festival in a new capacity that the Board and I are discussing.

I am so proud of the growth we've experienced together, the music we've made, and the friendships formed in this extraordinary place.

Thank you for 17 wonderful years of music-making, dreaming big, and creating something truly special on Beaver Island.

I look forward to seeing you in July.

PUBLIC NOTICE - ST. JAMES TOWNSHIP TOWNSHIP BOARD OF REVIEW MARCH MEETING SCHEDULE

The St. James Township Board of Review for 2026 will be held at the Beaver Island Historical Society Museum at the corner of Forest and Main Street on the following dates:

Organizational Meeting:
Tuesday, March 3, 2026 from 01:30 p.m. - 03:00 p.m.
Appeal Hearings:
Monday, March, 9, 2026 from 03:00 p.m. - 09:00 p.m.
Tuesday, March 10, 2026 from 11:00 a.m. - 05:00 p.m.

The Board of Review will meet as many more days as deemed necessary to hear questions, protests, and to equalize the 2026 assessments.

By township board resolution, residents are able to protest by letter, provided the protest letter is received prior to **March 9, 2026.**

The tentative ratios and the estimated multipliers for each class of real property and personal property for 2026 are as follows:

Property Class	Ratio	Factor
Commercial	48.36%	1.03391
Residential	44.28%	1.12918
Developmental	50.00%	1.0000
Timber Cutover	50.00%	1.0000
Industrial	50.00%	1.0000
Personal Property	50.00%	1.0000

American With Disabilities (ADA) Notice: The Township will provide necessary reasonable services to individuals with disabilities at the Board of Review meetings upon 3 days notice. Museum is barrier free if you enter from the museum entry that faces Forest Ave. Contact: Julie Gillespie, P.O. Box 85, Beaver Island, MI 49782 231-448-2761

Board of Review Members Frank D'Andraia (Chair), Kathleen Antkoviak, & Audrey Vandyke. Board of Review Alternates: Nancy Darling (Alternate), John Manza (2nd Alternate). Secretary of Board of Review Lori Taylor-Blitz, Deputy Township Supervisor. St. James Township Assessor: Brooke Mildbrandt.

ST. JAMES TOWNSHIP, BEAVER ISLAND
CHARLEVOIX COUNTY, MICHIGAN
Resolution 2026.02.11.26 #5

Authorizing a local resident taxpayer to file his or her protest before the Board of Review by letter without a personal appearance by the local resident taxpayer or his or her agent.

At a regular meeting of the St James Township Board, held at the Beaver Island Historical Society's Print Shop Museum, located in St James Township, Michigan on February 11, 2026.

Present: Gillespie, Welke, McDonough Peirano
Absent: Cole
The following resolution was made by Peirano and seconded by Gillespie.

WHEREAS the General Property Tax Act, MCL 211.30(4) states that "When appealing to the Board of Review a nonresident taxpayer may file his or her appearance, protest, and papers in support of the protest by letter, and his or her appearance is not required", and

WHEREAS MCL 211.30(8) states the "The governing body of a township or city may authorize, by adoption of an ordinance or resolution, a resident taxpayer to file his or her protest before the Board of Review by letter without a personal appearance by the taxpayer or his or her agent. If that ordinance or resolution is adopted, the township or city shall include a statement notifying taxpayers of this option in each assessment notice under section 24c and on each notice or publication of the meeting of the board of review".

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED that, to ease the burden on taxpayers, the assessor and the Board of Review, and to ensure that all taxpayers have an equal opportunity to be heard by the Board of Review, the St James Township Board hereby resolves, according to provisions of MCL 211.30(8) of the General Property Tax Act, that the Board of Review shall receive letters of protest regarding assessments from resident taxpayers from the first Tuesday in March until it adjourns from the public hearings for which it meets to hear such protests.

All notices of assessment change and all advertisements of Board of Review Meetings must include a statement that the resident taxpayers may protest by letter to the Board.

AYES: Peirano, Welke, McDonagh, Gillespie
NAYS: None

THE SUPERVISOR DECLARED THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED

By: Julie Gillespie Date: 2-11-26
The above signed, Julie Gillespie, herby certifies that she is the duly elected and acting clerk of the Township of St James and further certifies that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted at a regular board meeting of the Township board held on February 11, 2026.

To review Resolution #6, approved on February 11, regarding poverty exemption income guidelines and asset test policy, visit the Northern Islander website for the full public notice at www.northernislander.news.

THE STORIES BEHIND THE NAMES OF ISLANDERS LOST ON THE GREAT LAKES

By Connie Wojan

The following article is a part of an ongoing series based on Islanders listed on the Great Lakes Memorial.

Catherine Gallagher, Mary Gallagher, Bridget Green, Rose Gallagher, Charles Gallagher, Hannah Malloy, and Louis Gebeau perished when the wooden-hulled steamer Vernon was swamped by up to 40-foot waves as it attempted to cross Lake Michigan from near Frankfurt to Milwaukee during the stormy night of October 29, 1887. Because the passenger list went down with the ship, we can only estimate the total number of those lost at between 36-50.

Besides the huge rollers bearing down from the northeast (which also almost sunk four other vessels in the area that night), poor design and gross overloading contributed to the Vernon's sinking. The ship was 157 feet long, 28 feet wide and 18 feet deep. Despite being "regarded as one of the most elegant ships on the Great Lakes…with extensive brass fittings, eighteen staterooms and a large cabin lounge," the Vernon's design was "criticized at the time of her construction for sacrificing buoyancy and stability in return for speed, predicting sooner or later she would meet with disaster." (Wikipedia)

The only survivor of the sinking, crew member Axel Stone, testified consistently that, when the Vernon left her last port, she was so heavily loaded that "she had an inch and a half freeboard on one side and six inches on the other. It was the biggest load I had ever seen on her." This assertion is confirmed by manifest records which list "400 boxes of fish, 90 tons of pig iron, 2000 bushels of potatoes, 90,000-barrel staves and other general merchandise." aboard. (Wikipedia) According to Stone, this load made the hold "so full that the gangways could not be closed," allowing it to be flooded by the huge waves washing over the vessel. Soon the engine's two steam boilers were extinguished, leaving the Vernon powerless to maneuver against the angry seas. Surprisingly, a post-accident investigation did not result in any penalties for the Vernon's owners or operators. In 1969, Axel's accusations were proven true when divers discovered the wreck in 200 feet of water northeast of Two Rivers, Wisconsin. Their inspection confirmed that the excessive cargo was still in place and that the gangways were indeed open as the crewman had insisted. (Wikipedia)

The sinking of the Vernon resulted in the most Islanders ever drowned in one incident. "Big Mike" Gallagher and his wife Susan Mooney Gallagher, both born on Arranmore, suffered the most devastating loss, for they had three daughters aboard: Catherine (24), Mary (25), and Bridget (28). Catherine and Mary were single. Bridget was married to John Neal Green, and according to some sources, she left a young family. Catherine and Mary's bodies were recovered, "their long red hair tied together." (Donegal Genealogy Resources) Bridget's was not. Nevertheless three small headstones, including one in memory of Bridget, still stand close together in Holy Cross Cemetery near where their parents rest.

According to Henry Hill in Vol. V, Journal of Beaver Island History, Rose Gallagher, (no relation to Charles or the Gallagher sisters) was travelling on the Vernon to Chicago "to try to persuade her husband (Condy Gallagher) to return and live with her." Rose was 40 on the day she stepped aboard the Vernon in hopes of saving her marriage. Helen Collar's papers note that Rose was born on Arranmore. She and Condy met in New York, around 1868-69, moved to Pennsylvania in 1875, and arrived on Beaver Island by 1878. By 1880, both Rose and Condy were 33 and living on Beaver Island with five children: John, Philip, Mary, Isabel, and Neil. A daughter, Rose, and a son, Corneilius, were born after 1880. I was unable to determine whether the loss of his wife prompted Condy to return to Beaver Island to raise their offspring (as young as two when Rose died).

We do know from Alaksa census records that in 1920, Condy was living, at age 73, in the household of his son Neil, Neil's wife and children, and two other adult sons, Philip and Cornelius. Neil's occupation is listed as fisherman. It is possible the men worked together in a fishing business. Records show Rose's body was recovered and buried in Holy Cross Cemetery; however, she has no headstone.

The stories of the others lost in the sinking of the Vernon to be continued in the next issue of The Northern Islander. I strongly encourage those interested in more of the fascinating details about the sinking of the Vernon to read Henry Hill's superb article in Vol. V Journal of Beaver Island History.

Pictured are the headstones of the three Gallagher sisters lost in the sinking of the Vernon.

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REMEMBERING LOIS SARAH WILLIAMS

Submitted by Patrick O'Sullivan

(May 10, 1937 – January 31, 2026)

From the song "Drops of Jupiter" by Pat Monahan of Train

> But tell me, did the wind sweep you off your feet?
> Did you finally get the chance to dance along the light of day
> And head back to the Milky Way?
> And tell me, did Venus blow your mind?
> Was it everything you wanted to find?

Lois was born May 10, 1937, in Detroit, Michigan, to Carrie and Albert Sweetland. Albert was a carpenter. And then a bible-spanking minister and believer in the "One-Way Baptist Church." Carrie, diminutive in person and personality, was the perfect minister's wife: meek, deferential and cautious.

How no one would describe Lois.

Lois Sweetland was outgoing and profoundly beautiful. Inside and out. Crowned Miss Greenville (Michigan) in 1955, she radiated a natural, genuine splendor. Through high school (Stanton and Greenville), she left an adolescent trail of broken hearts while abiding her over-bearing father (and brothers).

After graduating, she fled Greenville and studied nursing at Grace Hospital in Detroit. That pursuit was paused soon after she met David O'Sullivan on a girl's weekend visit to the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

Lois married three times: D. David O'Sullivan (1957), Lawrence R. Backofen (1971) and Joseph E. Williams (1987). She divorced David in 1967. Lawrence died of a brain stem hemorrhage in 1981. Joe, 94, survives today.

Between her first and second marriages, Lois returned to nursing school. This time at Hackley Hospital in Muskegon, Michigan. She graduated in 1970 and worked for Visiting Nurses (local, traveling nurses) before marrying Lawrence. While "retiring" from full-time nursing, she became a childbirth pioneer in western Michigan, promoting Lamaze natural childbirth theory and methods – teaching at Muskegon Community College and educating local Ob-gyn doctors on the importance of maternal-infant bonding. Lois trained the trainers and was subsequently responsible for the delivery of hundreds, if not thousands, of Muskegon area children (the good ones).

Lois and Joe met in 1982 (less than a year after Lawrence's death), at a fundraising event at the Holy Cross Hall on Beaver Island, northwest of Charlevoix, Michigan.

Two souls. Both lost. And then found.

Lois had bravely ventured to remote Beaver Island to escape the cruel reality of Lawrence's unexpected death (he was just 38) and the many unforeseen surprises his demise exposed.

Before Lois and Joe settled down together, she scratched her cooking itch and moved briefly to Sausalito, California to attend culinary school at Le Cordon Rouge. She'd worked her way through Julia Child's "The Art of French Cooking" and would not be denied taking her self-taught skills to a higher level.

Most of Lois and Joe's time, between then and now, was spent on the north shore of Beaver Island in a quaint cottage Joe and his friends built, overlooking Lake Michigan and the Beaver archipelago.

She lived a rich life full of simple things: authentic and unvarnished. Like the island. And the people that lived there and visited. She met, welcomed and entertained kindred spirits on Beaver … many becoming life-long friends. Her love for them endures. With no expiration date.

Lois became an avid hunter of deer, rabbit and turkey. She loved fishing for smallmouth bass, salmon and northern pike. She was proficient at identifying wildflowers, mushrooms and birds. More than anything, she embraced the solitude and all things natural the islands offered.

Lois was also a hospice volunteer and served on several boards. Her hobbies included skinny-dipping, martini-drinking, camping and carousing (with her crazy girlfriends), writing, reading, water coloring and pen and ink drawings, gardening and, of course, cooking.

The kitchen was her dominion, "Chef-Know-It-All, Chef Tell-It-All." She reigned supreme among her pots and pans. There is no denying the expert level of skill and creativity she achieved. Her food preparation was then equaled by her masterful presentation of each dish. No detail too small.

Lois' talents were immense and diverse. Her love for Joe and family were paramount. And her sharp wit and often wry sense of humor were part and parcel of her sparkling personality.

Born 5th of 6, Lois was the last surviving child of her parents. She was preceded in death by her youngest son, Brian, and is survived by her husband, Joe, now living in Athens, Georgia; and her son, D. Patrick (Rocky) O'Sullivan of Shallotte, North Carolina and Rogers City, Michigan and Patrick's wife, Carrie, as well as their children, Kelly and Caitlin and Kelly's wife Lottie and their children: Clementine, Felicity and Marigold.

The family would like to express its gratitude to the hospice team of Compassus and the staff and caregivers at MediLodge of Rogers City. Lois' comfort and contentment in her final days were merely a reflection of their loving care.

Memorial donations may be sent to the Beaver Island Community Center at P.O. Box 494, Beaver Island, Michigan 49782.

The family will gather this summer for a celebration of Lois' life.

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CHARLEVOIX COUNTY COMMISSIONERS SYNOPSIS - JANUARY 28, 2026

Submitted by Kim Garver

The Charlevoix County Board of Commissioners met in the Charlevoix County Commissioners room on January 28, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. Four Commissioners were present. Excused: Commissioner Chamberlain and Commissioner Kenney.

Motion approved the agenda as amended.

Motion approved the consent agenda as presented.

Public Hearing on the CDBG Emergency Generator Grant Closeout opened for comments from the floor at 6:02 p.m. With no further comments the public hearing closed at 6:03 p.m.

Motion approved Resolution #26-011, Grandvue Operating Transfer.

Motion approved the appointment of Jessica Porter to the Charlevoix County Land Bank.

Motion approved the appointment of Scot Egleston to the Charlevoix County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.

Motion approved the appointment of William Henne to the Charlevoix County Sanitary Code Board of Appeals.

Motion approved Resolution #26-012, 2026 Jail Nurse Agreement.

Motion approved Resolution #26-013, Bulletproof Vest Grant.

The meeting was adjourned to the call of the Chair at 6:35 p.m. Complete copies of the Board minutes can be found on the County website, www.charlevoixcounty.org.

Julia A. Drost, County Clerk

CHARLEVOIX COUNTY COMMISSIONERS SYNOPSIS - FEBRUARY 11, 2026

Submitted by Kim Garver

The Charlevoix County Board of Commissioners met in the Charlevoix County Commissioners room on February 11, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. Five Commissioners were present. Excused: Commissioner Conway.

Motion approved the agenda as amended.

Motion approved the consent agenda as amended.

Motion approved Resolution #26-014, County Expenditures.

Motion approved the appointment of Sarah Bronson to the North Country Community Mental Health Board.

Motion approved the Machin Engineering Additional Services Agreement.
Motion approved the CDBG Urgent Need Grant Letter of Intent.

Motion approved Resolution #26-015, Accept Donation of Money or Property to Charlevoix County.

Motion approved Resolution #26-016, Accept Donation of Money or Property to Charlevoix County.

Motion approved Resolution #26-017, Community Development Block Grant Guidelines.

Motion approved to table Resolution #26-018, Parks Logo.

Motion approved Resolution #26-019, Parks Snowplow Purchase.

The meeting was adjourned to the call of the Chair at 10:01 a.m. Complete copies of the Board minutes can be found on the County website, www.charlevoixcounty.org.

Julia A. Drost, County Clerk

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